

Want To Adopt A Highway?



Operated by the Kane County Division of Transportation's Maintenance and Permit Departments, the County's popular "adopt-a-highway" program continues to attract an ever-increasing number of groups and volunteers. With the pending approval of the most recent applications to participate in the popular anti-litter program, including renewed applications for another two years, the total number of Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) members has grown to nearly 100 active groups, according to KDOT Superintendent Carl Schoedel. Under the program, more than 1,100 citizen volunteers from churches, schools, businesses, scout troops, families, labor groups and sports teams currently have pledged to support the county's anti-litter efforts by adopting a specific section, or sections, of County Highway, between a half-mile and two miles long, for the purpose of keeping it clean.

"This program has been a fantastic way to give back to the community and keep our roadsides looking good at the same time. We're thankful for the work of the groups and we're always looking for a few more volunteers," said Schoedel. When it was instituted more than 16 years ago, "it was fairly unique for local governments," he said. Using the adopt-a-highway programs of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and transportation departments in several other states for guidance, Kane County modeled its own application form and worked with the Kane County State's Attorney's Office "to create a system that would work for county government," according to Schoedel. "Since then, the program has spread. I'm sure other local governments have used Kane County's program as a model for their own," he said.

Kane County has 91 active groups, 1,188 members and 155 miles of road being maintained by the AHA program, according to program coordinator Glenda Starceвич. "With the two new groups and nine renewals that we are submitting to our Transportation Committee in April, we will be adding another 149 members and 17.75 miles of roadway clean-up back into the active counts," she said.

As part of the program, KDOT identifies each adopted highway section with a permanent road sign bearing the name of the group. KDOT-managed safety training for all group members is mandatory and each group must provide at least one adult supervisor over the age of 21 for every five youths under the age of 18 present on its adopted section of County Highway. No one under the age of 10 is allowed to participate. A minimum of one clean-up a year is required.

Including the cost for supplies that KDOT supplies the groups, Starcevich estimates the county saves more than \$30,000 a year through the volunteer program.

"This program helps bring people together, and that makes us very proud of the good that comes from it," she said. We invite anyone that see's our Adopt-A-Highway sign to call us to adopt a section of county road."

For a complete list of participating groups, to view a video that explains the program and other information in detail, please visit the program's [web page](#).

<http://www.co.kane.il.us/dot/maintenance/adoptHiway.aspx>

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